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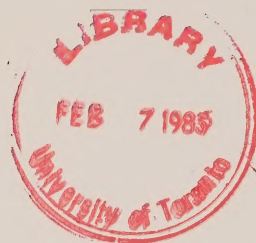
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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING



Ontario

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing



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INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is involved in issues related to:

- local government
- community planning
- specific provincial land holdings
- housing

It has five main components:

Municipal Affairs, which is concerned with local governments, ensures municipalities have the legislative authority to respond to local needs. It offers management and administrative support, along with financial assistance, to municipal governments.

Community Housing helps to meet the housing needs of Ontario residents, particularly low- and moderate-income families, senior citizens, physically-handicapped and mentally-retarded persons.

Real Estate, through the Ontario Land Corporation and its subsidiary, the Ontario Mortgage Corporation, is responsible for the province's land holdings designated for residential, commercial or industrial development and for mortgage and lease administration.

Community Planning encourages effective land use planning in Ontario so that communities develop within a framework consistent with overall provincial policies. It gives advice and assistance to municipalities and the private sector, to encourage sound planning at the community level.

Corporate Resources Management provides central financial and administrative services to the ministry. It also sets standards for public safety in all buildings constructed in Ontario, through the buildings branch.

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MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

- *The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing deals with the 838 municipalities in Ontario, communities which vary greatly in both size and structure:*
- *Upper-tier municipalities — regions and counties — provide region-wide services like major roads, planning and social services, and, in the case of regions, police and water and sewerage works.*
- *Lower-tier municipalities — cities, boroughs, towns, villages and townships — provide local services and facilities such as garbage collection, fire services, local streets and sidewalks and cultural and recreational facilities.*
- *Municipalities range in size from Metro Toronto, with over two million residents, to Cockburn Island Township in Manitoulin which has only two.*
- *Most people in Ontario live in large municipalities, but the majority of municipal councils represent much smaller populations. The average community has about 10,000 residents — the size of the population of Port Hope or Tillsonburg — and about 600 municipalities have fewer than 5,000.*
- *Municipalities in Ontario have a combined annual budget of some \$7 billion, more than one-third of which comes directly from the province.*

Municipal Affairs is responsible for issues related to municipal finance, local government organization, provincial/municipal liaison and municipal support. These are managed through a number of different branches.

The **Local Government Organization Branch** advises senior management and the minister on the degree of responsibility local governments need to carry out their specific responsibilities.

The branch helps in policy formulation and co-ordinates municipal legislation.

The **Municipal Finance Branch** develops policy and legislation to ensure the long-term financial viability of Ontario municipalities.

The **Provincial/Municipal Affairs Secretariat** performs a liaison function between the provincial government and those municipal organizations which represent local government in Ontario.

It publishes: Background, a weekly newsletter on topics of interest to local government; an annual municipal directory, which is a widely-used source of information related to elected and appointed municipal officials and populations; and a bi-monthly summary of municipal resolutions.

The **Subsidies Branch** provides municipalities with appropriate financial and management resources to help meet their responsibilities through the delivery of loan, grant and transfer payments.

The **Municipal Management Policy Branch** offers a broad range of advisory services to improve local government effectiveness, and monitors financial management and reporting requirements for municipalities.

The **Municipal Boundaries Branch** helps municipalities resolve boundary disputes and related issues.

The **Field Services Branch** operates a network of 10 field services offices to assist municipalities, the public, other government ministries and agencies, on all aspects of local government.

Field offices are located in: Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Ottawa, Kingston, Oshawa, Orillia, Cambridge, Guelph and London, with a head office in Toronto.

COMMUNITY HOUSING

- *About 10 per cent of the 1.1 million rental households in Ontario pay rent solely based on income, through programs funded by the federal and provincial governments.*
- *In centres such as Metro Toronto, Ottawa, Windsor and Sudbury, about one rental household in seven benefits from rent-geared-to-income housing.*
- *About 22 per cent of the total rental stock in Ontario — some 245,000 units — has been developed with direct government financial aid.*
- *The Ontario Rental Construction Loan Program, with \$90.5 million in provincial loans, resulted in more than 15,000 new rental units. The program was administered by the ministry's real estate component.*
- *The Ontario Renter-Buy Program, also administered by Real Estate, helped in the purchase of almost 15,000 homes, freeing up thousands of rental units and easing pressure on the rental market, as well as creating jobs. The provincial investment was \$74 million in interest-free loans.*
- *More than 6,000 rental units have been built under the municipal non-profit housing program. It is administered by the province and funded under a federal-provincial agreement. The average subsidy on each rental unit is almost \$500 per month.*

Community Housing focuses on a range of housing activities, including the private sector rental and ownership markets, and helps meet the needs of low- and moderate-income families, senior citizens and disabled persons through a variety of programs. It is concerned with:

- Issues relating to the development, financing and construction or acquisition of housing built or supported with government aid
- Fostering residential construction in the private sector
- Promoting housing renovation and energy conservation
- Encouraging the upgrading of existing housing
- Planning for the future shelter needs for groups such as the elderly and disabled persons, in concert with other provincial social agencies
- Converting unused non-residential properties such as warehouses into housing

Community Housing is made up of three areas: **Ontario Housing Corporation, Housing Policy and Program Development Branch, Housing Renovation and Energy Conservation Unit.**

Ontario Housing Corporation, a crown agency governed by a board of directors:

- Develops social housing policies and programs
- Administers housing programs such as municipal non-profit and rent supplement
- Evaluates administrative and operational procedures associated with social housing programs
- Manages, through a network of 60 **local housing authorities**, the 84,500 rental units owned by the corporation

Agents of OHC, the local housing authorities are responsible for the day-to-day management of social housing. Their duties include selecting tenants who pay rents based on their incomes and maintaining the rental properties.

The OHC field operations branch is responsible for six regional housing programs offices located in Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Toronto, Sudbury and Thunder Bay, offering a “one-window” service to OHC’s various client groups involved with housing.

These regional offices support the administration of local housing authorities and municipal non-profit corporations. They also give technical support — architectural, engineering and appraisal services — for program delivery and property maintenance activities. Regional staff administer initiatives such as the Convert-to-Rent program.

The field operations branch has a financial planning and control section which addresses financial management needs, particularly the management of social housing budgets.

The **OHC technical support branch** is a small head office operation which acts as a resource for regional housing programs offices staff. The branch’s duties include planning for long-term maintenance and upgrading of OHC housing and estimating costs for major renovation or repair work.

The **OHC program policy and evaluation branch** is responsible for developing new social housing policies and programs, as well as reviewing existing programs and procedures. The branch's management operations review section reviews the management operations of housing authorities and municipal non-profit corporations. Its operations support services section evaluates support programs such as social and recreational activities.

Community Housing's **housing policy and program development branch** is involved with broad, general housing policy, both rental and ownership. Its duties include developing strategic policy for government initiatives in private market ownership and rental housing, monitoring economic conditions and trends that affect housing policies, and developing new housing programs. The branch is also responsible for Community Housing's corporate and strategic planning.

The **housing renovation and energy conservation unit** promotes efficient use of existing housing stock and energy in the residential sector. Particular emphasis is given to renovation and the opportunities it presents for energy conservation measures. This Community Housing unit works closely with other levels of government, including municipalities, and the private sector.

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- *Ontario Housing Corporation is a crown agency providing shelter in which rents are based on the household incomes of tenants rather than on the size or type of accommodation.*
 - *OHC helps subsidize more than 115,500 rent-geared-to-income units in more than 300 municipalities.*
 - *Rent subsidies of more than \$6 million a week are shared between the federal and provincial governments.*
 - *Family rents in OHC units average \$188 a month. For senior citizens, the average monthly rent is \$155. The average monthly rent subsidy for each unit is \$244.*
 - *In 1984 OHC will pay municipalities more than \$70 million in grants in lieu of property taxes.*
 - *OHC's utility costs — electricity, fuel and water — will amount to about \$69 million in 1984.*
 - *OHC owns 84,500 units with a replacement value of about \$3.3 billion.*
 - *In addition to these 84,500 units, OHC supports some 31,000 rent-geared-to-income units in properties not owned by the corporation.*
 - *OHC is helping to support more than 250,000 tenants across Ontario.*

REAL ESTATE

- *Ontario Land Corporation has assets of about \$1.1 billion.*
- *A major portion of the corporation's land inventory is leased to farmers under the Farm Lease Program.*
- *Ontario Mortgage Corporation, a subsidiary of OLC, has a mortgage portfolio valued at about \$550 million.*

Real Estate provides administrative support to the **Ontario Land Corporation** and its subsidiary, **Ontario Mortgage Corporation**.

The Ontario Land Corporation, a provincial crown agency, is responsible for managing, financing, planning, developing and marketing 27,000 hectares of land owned by the province for residential, commercial and industrial development. This includes the new community of Townsend in the Haldimand-Norfolk region of southwestern Ontario, Seaton northeast of Metro Toronto, Heritage Green near Stoney Creek, and Malvern, a federal-provincial project in northeast Scarborough.

The corporation also directs the mortgage lending activities of Ontario Mortgage Corporation. The land corporation's operations and policies are governed through a board of directors.

The **Marketing and Sales Branch** is responsible for the marketing and disposal of land holdings which range from raw land to fully-serviced lots. It handles the sale of properties acquired through mortgage defaults.

The **Planning and Development Branch** is responsible for the planning and development of corporation lands acquired for residential, commercial and industrial purposes. It controls the overall project co-ordination of lands currently under development, or held by the corporation for future use.

The **Land Operations Branch** manages rental properties acquired by the corporation, either directly (as in the case of the North Pickering land assembly), or through the Ministry of Government Services. The branch also supervises engineering and construction contracts and provides engineering, planning and graphic services to support development and property management operations.

The **Mortgage Administration and Services Branch** administers mortgages and leases committed under various provincial programs. These include the Quick Pay Plan which allows current OMC mortgagors to reduce the amortization period of their mortgages by making weekly and bi-weekly payments rather than the traditional monthly payments.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

- *The Community Planning Study Grant Program, in operation since 1975, helps municipalities resolve local planning issues. To date, more than 70 per cent of all municipalities with populations of 15,000 or less have participated, with the province providing more than \$9 million in grants.*
- *Ontario has provided more than \$95 million in various programs to upgrade and revitalize older neighbourhoods and commercial areas in municipalities across Ontario. Some 57 communities participated in the Main Street Revitalization Program, 11 in the Ontario Downtown Revitalization Program and 66 communities are now taking part in the Ontario Neighbourhood Improvement Program.*
- *Since the Ontario Home Renewal Program was launched in 1974, more than \$150 million has been given to municipalities to encourage homeowners to upgrade their properties. The program, administered by Ontario Housing Corporation, remains active in many municipalities.*

Community Planning encourages effective land use planning in Ontario so that communities develop within a sound planning framework consistent with provincial policies. Community Planning:

- Assists in preserving the physical and social character of communities by developing and administering programs to help municipalities maintain and improve neighbourhoods and downtowns
- Provides technical and financial assistance to municipalities preparing planning documents, so that communities can set development priorities
- Conducts research into all aspects of planning, and gives technical advice and information to municipalities, government agencies and the development industry

Community Planning is responsible for local land use planning under the Planning Act, the Municipal Act, the Registry Act, the Condominium Act, the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, the Parkway Belt Planning and Development Act and the Land Titles Act.

Functions carried out by the following branches:

The **Local Planning Policy Branch** recommends provincial policies and legislation and establishes municipal planning guidelines consistent with provincial objectives.

The **Plans Administration Branches** — Central and Southwest, and North and East — carry out regulatory and monitoring functions for a variety of planning matters. These two branches monitor subdivision, condominium and official plan approvals delegated to regions, and severances granted by committees of adjustment, land division committees and delegated planning boards. In addition, the Central and Southwest branch is responsible for handling appeals to decisions on Niagara Escarpment development permits, as well as implementing the Parkway Belt West Plan and approving amendments to Parkway Belt regulations.

The **Community Planning Programs Division** coordinates the programs and activities of the **Community Renewal Branch**, **Community Planning Advisory Branch**, and the **Research and Special Projects Branch**. The division ensures efficient delivery of planning and community improvement services to Ontario communities.

The **Community Renewal Branch** encourages community improvement through assistance to municipalities and the private sector and administers ongoing projects funded under previous renewal programs.

The **Community Planning Advisory Branch** provides wide-range planning services to municipalities, the development industry and the public. These include direct technical and financial assistance in resolving local planning issues, educational activities, and ongoing information and advice on planning legislation, procedures and related administration. The branch has regional offices located in Ottawa, London, Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Toronto.

The **Research and Special Projects Branch** provides technical advice on community planning in support of the wing and the ministry, emphasizing practical approaches to community planning and development. Its publications provide a useful insight into planning issues for municipalities, other government agencies, consultants and the development industry.

CORPORATE RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

- *The ministry's annual budget (1983-84) was \$1.1 billion.*
- *About 1,300 civil servants are employed by the ministry.*

Corporate Resources Management provides central legal, financial, human resources and administrative services to the ministry.

Within corporate resources management is the **Ontario Buildings Branch**, responsible for the Building Code Act and the Ontario Building Code, as well as a section of the Ontario Water Resources Act providing for a provincial plumbing code.

Basically, the building code regulates the design and construction of buildings in order to minimize the risk of loss of life, bodily injury and property damage. The branch reviews legislation and regulations governing buildings in Ontario to ensure they are compatible. It also disseminates information to the building industry on construction requirements and new technology.

The branch also provides advice and interpretation to municipalities, the building industry and the public on code requirements and is responsible for the administration of the Building Code Commission and Building Materials Evaluation Commission.



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